CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for identifying a preferred defined contribution plan, comprising the steps of:

(a)   transferring, from a broker processing device to a central processing device, a plurality of preference values associated with a respective plurality of performance categories;

(b)   scoring, by the central processing device, a plurality of defined contribution plans, wherein a first defined contribution plan includes the plurality of performance categories and a respective plurality of performance category scores;

(c)   ordering, by the central processing device, the plurality of defined contribution plans by the plurality of performance category scores;

(d)   assigning, by the central processing device, a plurality of rank values to the respective plurality of defined contribution plans corresponding to the respective plurality of performance category scores; and,

(e)   transferring, to the broker processing device from the central processing device, the preferred defined contribution plan in response to the plurality of preference values and the plurality of rank values.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the defined contribution plan is a 401k plan.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the performance categories are selected from a group consisting of a) communication between a vendor and participants, b) investment advice offered to participants, c) extent or ability to increase participation at a later date, d) flexibility in using multi-fund family offerings, e) performance of investments, f) ability to self-direct an accounts, g) cost to the plan sponsor, h) cost to the plan participants, i) amount of internal administration necessary or provided, j) accuracy and timeliness of the administration, k) existence of a local service contact and m) ability to handle trustee and 404(c) concerns.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the transferring step (a) includes the step of using a graphic user interface to input preference values.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprises the step of a broker entering defined contribution plan characteristics.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein defined contribution plan characteristics are selected from group consisting of a) number of plan participants, b) plan size measured by assets, and c) cash flow.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein a first rank value, in the plurality of rank values, is a number between 1 and 5.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the transferring step (a) includes a plan sponsor providing defined contribution plan characteristics to a broker.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the transferring step (e) includes multiplying a first rank value in the plurality of rank values by a first preference value in the plurality of preference values to obtain a first plan category value.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the transferring step (e) includes multiplying a second rank value in the plurality of rank values by a second preference value in the plurality of preference values to obtain a second plan category value; and wherein, the first plan category value and second plan category value are summed to select the preferred defined contribution plan.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigning step includes assigning a rank value to a cost to company category in response to a Grid Matrix Analysis.

12.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

(f)   filtering, by the central processing device, the plurality of defined contribution plans in response to a defined contribution plan characteristic.

13.   A system for identifying a preferred defined contribution plan, comprising:

(a)   first processing device for providing a plurality of preference values; and,

(b)   a second processing device, coupled to the first processing device, providing a preferred defined contribution plan in response to the plurality of preference values.

14.   A computer for identifying a preferred defined contribution plan, comprising:

a storage device;

a processor, coupled to the storage device,

the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and,

the processor operative with the program to:

(a)   receive a plurality of preference values;

(b)   score a plurality of defined contribution plans, wherein a first defined contribution plan includes a plurality of performance categories and respective plurality of performance category scores;

(c)   order the plurality of defined contribution plans by the plurality of performance categories;

(d)   assign a plurality of rank values to the respective plurality of defined contribution plans corresponding to the respective plurality of performance category scores; and,

(g)   select the preferred defined contribution plan in response to the plurality of preference values and the plurality of rank value.

15.   The computer of claim 14, wherein the storage device stores a database containing the plurality of defined contribution plans and a respective plurality of performance category scores.

16. The computer of claim 14, wherein the storage device stores a plurality of broker identification numbers.

17. A method for identifying a preferred defined contribution plan, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining a plurality of preference values associated with respective performance categories;

(b) scoring a plurality of defined contribution plans, wherein a first defined contribution plan includes a plurality of performance categories and respective plurality of performance category scores;

(c) ordering the plurality of defined contribution plans by the plurality of performance category scores;

(h) assigning a plurality of rank values to the respective plurality of defined contribution plans corresponding to the respective plurality of performance category scores; and,

(i) selecting the preferred defined contribution plan in response to the plurality of preference values and the plurality of rank values.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the selecting step includes multiplying a first rank value in the plurality of rank values by a first preference value in the plurality of preference values to obtain a first plan category value.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the selecting step includes multiplying a second rank value in the plurality of rank values by a second preference value in the plurality of preference values to obtain a second plan category value, and wherein the first plan category value and second plan category value are summed to select the preferred defined contribution plan.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the preferred defined contribution plan is a 401(k) plan.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the obtaining step (a) includes the

step of using a graphic user interface to input preference values.

22. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of obtaining defined plan contribution characteristics.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein defined plan contribution characteristics are selected from a group consisting of a) number of plan participants, b) plan size measured by assets, and c) cash flow.

24. An article of manufacture, including a computer readable medium, comprising:

(a) a first software component for receiving a plurality of preference values associated with respective performance categories;

(b) a second software component for scoring a plurality of defined contribution plans, wherein a first defined contribution plan includes a plurality of performance catagories and respective plurality of performance category scores;

(c) a third software component for ordering the plurality of defined contribution plans by the respective plurality of performance category scores;

(d) a fourth software component for assigning a plurality of rank values to the respective plurality of defined contribution plans corresponding to the respective plurality of performance category scores; and,

(e) a fifth software component for providing a preferred defined contribution plan in response to the plurality of preference values and the plurality of rank values.

25. The article of manufacture of claim 24, further comprising a sixth software component for comparing the preferred defined contribution plan to another preferred contribution plan.